They also asked for the school lunch program and breakfast program to be changed because the witnesses even called by the majority side said that that is wrong that we are cutting off food to children and some of the programs that have been developed over both Democrat and Republican administrations. But we used the testimony from the hearing yesterday and I called some senior citizens sites in my district and said, okay, just one provision of it that says that if you are under the age of 63, how many people are served in the Magnolia Multi-Purpose Center in Houston that are under the age of 63 and not disabled.

□ 2100

They told us, they said that this is the number we serve. They actually serve 35 people who are not classified as disabled and under the age of 63. The gentleman can look at the bill itself. It states if you are under 63, not disabled, you have to agree to work, or sign an affidavit to say you are working.

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming my time for the purpose of asking a question, I am not sure about the details of that, but if I am hearing the gentleman correctly, he is saying if somebody is 63 years old and in good physical shape and able to work they are entitled to a free meal just because of their age.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The time of the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] has expired.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Maybe next week we can continue this dialog.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. KAPTUR. addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I support welfare reform. Reform of our welfare system is best accomplished by rewarding work—by making work a prize rather than a penalty.

Work is a prize when a full-time worker can earn enough to pay for life's necessities.

Work is a penalty when a person can achieve a better quality of life when getting public entitlements rather than holding a job.

That is why any discussion of welfare reform, must also include a discussion of other reforms. One such reform is minimum wage reform.

Contrary to a popular misconception, most minimum wage earners are adults, not young people.

And, many of the minimum wage workers are from rural communities. In fact, it is twice as likely that a minimum wage worker will be from a rural community than from an urban community.

The most disturbing fact is that far too many minimum wage workers have families, spouses and children who depend on them.

That is disturbing, Mr. Speaker, because a full-time worker, heading a family of three—the typical size of an American family today—and earning a minimum wage, would fall below the poverty line by close to $2,500 dollars. Imagine that.

In this country, a person can work, every day, full-time, and still be below the poverty level. Work, in that situation, is a penalty.

A review of the history of the minimum wage is revealing. First implemented in 1938, with passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act, the minimum wage covers ninety percent of all workers.

Between 1950 and 1981, the minimum wage was raised twelve times. During the 1980's, however, while prices were rising by 30 percent, Congress did not raise the minimum wage. Increases in 1980 and 1991 brought the wage to its current level, but did not bring it level with the cost of living.

In 1980, during the period when there were regular increases in the minimum wage as costs rose, a worker, with a family of three, earning a minimum wage, would have been above the poverty level. Work, in that situation, is a prize.

Enlightened economists and most recent studies now conclude that, increases in the minimum wage produce no significant changes in employment either up or down—among low wage firms.

Raising wages does not mean losing jobs. A recent, comprehensive study dramatically demonstrates this conclusion.

The State of New Jersey raised its minimum wage to $5.05. It's neighbor, the State of Pennsylvania, kept its minimum wage at the required level, $4.25.

According to the study, the number of low-wage workers in New Jersey actually increased, following the increase in the minimum wage, while the number of low-wage workers in Pennsylvania remained the same. Those are compelling results.

Since April, 1991, the minimum wage has remained constant, while the cost of living has risen, yet another 11 percent.

When costs go up and wages remain the same, the effect is that disposal income declines.

In other words, the ability of a minimum-wage worker to shelter, feed, and clothe his or her family becomes more and more difficult.

If, while working full time, a person has difficulty paying for housing, food, and clothing, the basic necessities, he or she can become discouraged.

The minimum wage affects many workers in America. More than 4 million individuals—6.6 percent of the labor force—worked at or below the labor force in 1993.

Another 9.2 million workers earned just above the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, it should interest us to know that most of the minimum-wage workers are women.

In fact, three out of every five or 62 percent of the minimum-wage workers are women. And, minimum-wage workers are more likely to be poor.

Last Congress, we expanded the earned income tax credit, and that helps those families who battle poverty each day.

But, that tax credit, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, does not go far enough to reach down and bring the minimum-wage workers out of poverty. We must do more.

When a person works, he or she feels good about themselves. They contribute to their communities, and they are in a position to help their families. Work gives a person an identity.

Our policies, therefore, should encourage people to work. We discourage them from working when we force them to work at wages that leave them in poverty.

Soon, Congress will have the opportunity to raise the minimum wage. Let's make rewarding work and wage reform an essential part of welfare reform. Let's encourage people to work. And, let's insure that they can work at a livable wage.

Let's raise the minimum wage.

CLEAN WATER ACT AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. FILNER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, today my colleagues and I from San Diego introduced a bill to amend the Clean Water Act to allow San Diego to treat it sewage in a cost-effective and environmentally sensitive manner.

This has been a long fight for many of us. I have been fighting against nonsensical Fed requirements for more than 6 years.

These efforts began when I was a member of the San Diego City Council. During this time, I often found myself on the losing end of 7 to 2 votes—because a majority of my city council did not want to challenge the Environmental Protection Agency. But I was convinced—by my own research and the testimony of scientists from the prestigious Scripps Institution of

Oceanography—that San Diego was already doing the right thing for our environment.

By 1992, my colleagues on the San Diego City Council came around and agreed with my position—that the requirement to upgrade the Point Loma treatment plant to secondary standards was ridiculous.

When I first ran for Congress, I promised to solve this sewage problem. And one of the first bills I introduced as a freshman in the 103d Congress was H.R. 3190, which is very similar to the bill that five of us introduced today.

But, unfortunately, here in Congress, I also met with resistance. I was told other cities were required to meet the secondary treatment standards, why should San Diego be treated differently?

I made it clear that my bill would in no way compromise the integrity of the Clean Water Act. In fact, by amending the law with common sense changes based on science, my legislation would ensure that the Clean Water Act had the flexibility needed to deal with unique situations and at the same time protect America's waters.

Mr. Speaker, let me explain. Existing law requires every city—regardless of environmental conditions and circumstances—to treat sewage at the secondary level. Yet scientific studies have proven that sewage treated at the chemically enhanced advanced primary level of treatment used by the city of San Diego, which removes over 80 percent of suspended solids in the sewage and discharges the treated effluent more than 4 miles out to sea at depths greater than 300 feet, does no environmental harm. In fact, eliminating power-consuming secondary treatment and the additional sludge it would produce would spare the environment from pollutants associated with wastewater treatment.

The city of San Diego is blessed with unique environmental conditions. The Continental Shelf drops off very sharply from the California coast. There is a very active ocean current. It also has an ocean outfall that is specifically engineered to maintain its surrounding waters so that our citizens can swim, fish, or boat with total confidence in our water quality.

By the end of the last session, my colleagues in the Congress agreed with my position and unanimously passed my bill to allow San Diego to apply for a waiver from the requirements of the Clean Water Act. And I have every confidence that this Environmental Protection Agency will approve San Diego's application for a waiver.

So why introduce another bill? Because this new legislation will ensure that San Diego will not have to jump though any more regulatory hoops.

Mr. Speaker, it costs more than $1 million to prepare an application for a waiver—and these waivers are temporary. The waivers are only good for a 5-year period. What is to prevent another administration from reversing its position and unilaterally trying to force San Diego to spend billions of dollars in unnecessary upgrades to its sewage treatment system? After all, history shows that the two previous administrations vigorously pursued such a lawsuit against San Diego.

There is scientific proof that this legislation is good environmental policy. Scientists from the highly respected Scripps Institution of Oceanography have concluded that upgrading from advanced primary to secondary treatment—the treatment required by current law—would have virtually no positive impact on our ocean's ecology.

In other words, the incredible costs for a small incremental increase in the purity of wastewater discharged into the ocean could not be justified by any measurable environmental gain.

I have led the fight against this unnecessary requirement since the time I served as a member of the San Diego City Council—that's over 6 years now. Today's action is the first time that the entire San Diego congressional delegation has united in this effort. And I applaud my colleagues for making this amendment a priority.

I hope that all of my colleagues in the 104th Congress will agree with us.

As this regulatory dance comes to its grand finale, the big winner will be the ratepayers of San Diego.

□ 2110

THE LINE-ITEM VETO DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak tonight on the item that has been under discussion so much today, which is the line-item veto debate, and I want to say starting out that I have consistently supported for a number of years a modified line-item veto.

I voted on it at least twice in this House; I voted for it. This House passed a modified line-item veto twice last session of Congress. It died in the other body.

I will be offering, along with the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. SPRATT] and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. STENHOLM], a substitute to the bill that is here before the committee, a substitute to the Republican version of a modified line-item veto.

Let us make clear what the goals are for all of us in dealing with a line-item veto discussion. The goals are twofold. First of all, the President be able to veto items in an appropriation bill that he or she thinks are unacceptable and send them back to the Congress for a vote up or down.

The second goal is that all Members be held accountable and must be forced to vote upon this veto.

The present system says that the President can rescind an item, that is, he can line-item it out, but that in order for it to go into effect, the Congress must act affirmatively. It must, both Houses, must act and vote ''yes'' in order for that to be preserved. The reality is that the Congress rarely takes a rescission up that the President sends in that vein, and it dies for failure of the Congress to act.

In both cases, the Republican version and the substitute that we will be offering, the Congress will be forced to vote upon this within a certain time limit. I think it is important to note that there are some letters flying around and discussion, is on an enhanced rescission, is on an expedited rescission. The fact of the matter is that whatever the policy wonks may call it, in both cases, the Republican version and our version, you are talking about a modified line-item veto, not a constitutional amendment, but a change in the statute.

Now, where are the differences? The differences are very clear. The difference is that at the end of the day after you go through the procedural hoops that each bill has, or the procedural requirements would be better stated, at the end of the day the Republican version requires two-thirds majority in order to overturn a rescission; in other words, it takes two-thirds of the Congress to say to the President, ''We do not agree, and you cannot take that item out.''

What that effectively does is to give control of the Congress to one-third-plus-one, a minority.

My version, the Spratt-Stenholm-Wise version, takes the other tack, which is to say it requires only a simply majority in order to defeat a rescission, and so the Congress must vote, but the majority rule is preserved, and a minority does not control the appropriations process.

Now, some argue that this really does not make any sense, that since a half of the Congress already voted for the total appropriations bill in which the offensive item was included, that, therefore, why should anyone expect that the Congress would reverse itself, that that majority would reverse itself? The answer is very clear: An appropriations bill that leaves here, a total appropriations bill, is a large package. It has many separate items in it, and sometimes you will vote for the entire package, because overall it is desirable even though there are individual items you disagree with.

What we are saying is that now when it comes back and the President has line-itemed out that offensive item, that now you can expect the Congress to take a fresh look at it, particularly since the Congress knows, every Member here knows, that their constituents at home are looking to see how they voted on this specific chance to cut the deficit and to cut the budget.

What is the significance of the difference between the Republican version and our version in terms of the two-thirds required to overturn versus the majority? It is very simple. It is one-